GENERAL INFORMATION

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Studio
Veldacademie
AR3EX1.10
The Veldacademie is part of the Explore Lab graduation studio of the TU Delft and is a collaboration between the municipalitie of Rotterdam and the TU Delft. It is a relatively small studio in the field where students from different courses can individually and jointly work on issues related to the transformation of Rotterdam South. The Veldacademie is aimed at dealing with social issues based on the input of the current context of the area. In the course of my Master of Architecture I have chosen the Veldacademie as it gave me the possibilities to compose my personal graduation project. Another reason I choose for the Veldacademie is the focus the studio has on actual issues, which are translated in realistic assignments.

Teachers
Mark Pimlott - Main mentor
Marie Therese Andeweg - Research mentor
Bas Gremmen - Construction mentor
Otto Trienekens - Lab coordinator of the Veldacademie

Graduation project - motivation and theme
Before I explain more about the outline of the Research and Design as the main parts of my graduation project, I will first proceed to describe my motivation and the underlying theme(s) of the project.

Over recent years vacancy has grown to be an immense problematic issue which is present in many urban and rural settings worldwide. The large and constantly growing (the construction of new buildings is still the main fashion) amount of vacant buildings causes many social and economical problems to develop or grow.

I firmly believe that in addition to its many problematic features, vacancy also brings forward new possibilities. In order to solve or decrease these issues a logical development would be to start the transformation and re-use of existing vacant and/or derelict buildings instead of adding new ones to the stock. The process a building goes through during it's lifetime fascinates me. Buildings have the ability to transform from factories to restaurants, from ministries to a workspace for freelancers, from offices to dwellings and so on. Not only does the building or area change because of these transformation processes and the new functions they facilitate, also the urban context of the location is reinterpreted.

Following this believe, I started looking for areas in the South of Rotterdam which faces many issues due to the presence of - and expected increase in the amount of - vacant buildings, but have a lot of potential for facilitating other functions. The area that I have chosen as the location for my graduation project is the Sluisjesdijkpier.

RESEARCH

Problem statement
The Sluisjesdijkpier is currently home to a variety of different companies. At the moment the area has a relatively high amount of vacant (and rapidly degrading) buildings, and many more are expected to follow in the coming years due to loss of function or expiry of tenancy. In addition to the vacancy issues, the area feels insecure as there aren't many people active in the public spaces of the area (or at all outside of opening hours) and therefore little social control is present. Currently the Sluisjesdijkpier is purely a working area, with not many other facilities encouraging social interaction.

The plans of the Havenbedrijf and the City of Rotterdam for the near future are to transform the pier into an attractive working environment, a more port-related area with maritime service companies. Although these plans are important for the future of the area, current issues such as vacancy, insecurity and secludedness amongst companies, might not all be solved or improved by the
methods embedded in these plans.

In my opinion, in order to create an attractive area, a variety of qualities of the area will need to be improved and/or introduced and a variety of target groups will need to be drawn towards the Sluisjesdijkpier.

Research question
Taking current issues with vacancy, insecurity and secludedness in consideration, how can the Sluisjesdijkpier become a more attractive environment and which functions or transformations could be applied to realize this?

Subquestions
**What is?**
- Which functions and buildings are currently present?
- What is the potential of the area?

**What could be?**
- Which functions are suitable?
- Which buildings are suitable for transformation?

**How can this become?**
- What are suitable options combining function and building characteristics?
- How can interaction between different functions and people be stimulated?

Research goal
The research will need to provide general insights and possible solutions to introduce new functions and transform vacant buildings in order to (re-)activate the Sluisjesdijkpier and solve or improve its current issues. These insights and possible solutions need to be used in my final project design.

Research objectives
- To provide insight into the past (history), present (current state) and future (plans by the municipality and the Havenbedrijf and other external developments) of the Sluisjesdijkpier;
- To identify and define the issues (vacancy, insecurity, secludedness and unattractiveness) which are currently present at the Sluisjesdijkpier and to estimate how these issues will be affected in the future;
- To research references and provide insight into methods, models and functions which have been used to re-activate (counter-acting negative social and economical effects as a result of vacancy) other (similar) areas;
- To create a clear profile of my vision for the appropriate (re)activation of the Sluisjesdijkpier including target groups;
- To introduce a model suitable for the re-activation of the Sluisjesdijkpier (in terms of methods, functions and scales) which can be used as a framework for my graduation project design.

Research methods
There are a few methods I will apply during my research.

1. Location analysis
   During the location analysis I will zoom in on the Sluisjesdijkpier and analyze different aspects of the location such as the history, accessibility, current functions, characteristics, potentials, etc.

2. Literature research
   In order to find certain facts and figures I studied literature in the form of relevant books, articles, destination plans, research documents, webpages and images.

3. Fieldwork
   To find extra necessary qualitative and quantitative data I will perform different kinds of fieldwork such as questionnaires and interviews. Also meetings and interviews with people who are highly involved with the development of the Sluisjesdijkpier will be part of my fieldwork.

4. Case studies and excursions
   Looking at references of re-activation methods in other (similar) areas will help me see what aspects do and do not work.
Sources
Many books, articles, images and webpages will be used for this research. Here I listed only the most relevant sources.

Literature

- Episkamp, M., Zanden, W. van der, Ruimte voor creativiteit, onderzoek naar de bedrijfsfisverbingsvraag van creatieve ondernemers in Rotterdam, Rotterdam, juni 2008.
- Gemeente Rotterdam, De top is binnen handbereik, een analyse van Rotterdam als jonge, creative stad (met aanbevelingen), Rotterdam, februari 2010.
- Gemeente Rotterdam, dKC en OBR, Van Creatieve Economie naar Creatieve Stad, Een verkenning van mogelijkheden tot verbreding van het beleid voor de creatieve economie in Rotterdam, Rotterdam, april 2010.
- Gemeente Rotterdam en Kamer van Koophandel Rotterdam, ZZPers in beeld Rotterdam Zuid: Charlois, Feijenoord en Usselemonde, Rotterdam, juni 2012.
- Kamer van Koophandel Rotterdam, ZZPers in beeld, Rotterdam, april 2012.
- Koops, O., Rutten, P., Creatieve industrie in opfers, Boekman 93, p. 100 - 102.
- Port of Rotterdam, Beeldkwaliteit Sluisjesdijkpier, visie en richtlijnen, Rotterdam, concept versie 20/3/13.

Websites

- www.cbs.nl
- www.kvk.nl
- www.portofrotterdam.com
DESIGN

Goal
To design a transformation of the (to be vacant in the near future) building Eekhoutstraat 5 - 9 into a creative hub. The goal of the transformation is to introduce new functions in the Sluisjesdijkpier in order to reactivate the Sluisjesdijkpier by improving its current issues and drawing a variety of target groups to the area. The design needs to incorporate the most important insights and possibilities from the research.

The design should not breathe an atmosphere of slick and complete, deliberate design, but should be designed more subtile. It should feel like a mix of spaces where creatives come together and are at work and where the atmosphere of the port and the original raw features of the building are strongly present. Not only the building itself should be reused, but also residual material from the direct surroundings should be used in the design. The public part of the building should have an open appearance which makes it clear that everybody is welcome.

Program of requirements
The design should incorporate the following program of requirements (aside from the standard facilities) in a functional and suitable way:
- 50 studios / offices
- exhibition space
- storage spaces
- meeting rooms
- flexible working spaces
- common spaces
- cafe / restaurant
- terrace along the water
- shop(s)

Relevance
There is a clear demand from the Havenbedrijf and the City of Rotterdam for solutions for now and for the near future which solve or decrease the current issues of the Sluisjesdijkpier (vacancy, insecurity, secludedness and unattractiveness). With my design I would like to propose / advice on realistic solutions.

An explanation of the relevance of the project in a larger context can be found in “Graduation project - motivation and theme” on the first page of this graduation plan.
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